



## New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual

Manual:	CP&P	Child Protection and Permanency	Effective Date:
Volume:	II	Intake, Investigation and Response	
Chapter:	E	Allegation Based System	12-30-2004
Subchapter:	1	Allegations	
Issuance:	2200	<b>Abandonment/Desertion</b>	

### ALLEGATION OF HARM

**12-30-2004**

An abandonment/desertion can be due to neglect -- allegation of harm #75.

### DEFINITION

**12-30-2004**

"Abandonment" means:

Abandonment is parental conduct that demonstrates the purpose of relinquishing all parental rights and claims to the child. Abandonment is also defined as any parental or caregiver conduct which evinces a settled purpose to forego all parental duties and relinquish all parental claims to the child.

"Desertion" means:

Desertion is any conduct on the part of a parent, which indicates that they have no intention, now or in the future, to maintain any degree of interest, concern or responsibility for the child. Desertion includes leaving a child with no apparent intention to return, unless the child has been left in the care of a relative.

Examples of abandonment/desertion include, but are not limited, to parents who:

- Leave a baby on the doorstep;
- Leave a baby in the garbage can;
- Leave a child with no apparent intention to return; or
- Leave a child with an appropriate caregiver but fail to resume care of the child, as agreed, and the caregiver cannot or will not continue to care for the child.

### TAKING A REPORT

**12-30-2004**

## **Usage -**

The Reporter has reason to believe that the child has been abandoned/deserted due to the parent, caregiver, or responsible person's disregard of his or her responsibilities. (NEGLECT)

## **INVESTIGATING A REPORT**

**12-30-2004**

Required Documentation/Evidence Needed to Support a Finding –

- Documented evidence that a child has been abandoned/deserted.
- Detailed explanatory statements of the child victim, perpetrator, witnesses, any other person with knowledge of the situation has been obtained.
- If police have conducted an investigation, the final police report must be obtained and documented. If the police report is not available, a case note must be included indicating the report has been requested along with documentation of the verbal statements. The Supervisor must review the Police report when it is received to ensure findings do not conflict with previously documented information received verbally.
- All other required contacts made, or documentation as to why they were not.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR INVESTIGATION**

**12-30-2004**

The Child Protective Investigator shall:

- Complete a safety assessment in accordance with policy, see [CP&P-III-B-6-600](#). Use CP&P Form [22-22](#), Safety Assessment (In-Home Cases).
- Hold in-person, individual interviews with the parents/caregivers. Parents should be contacted on the same day as contact with the child victim(s) if at all possible. If the safety assessment is marked unsafe, parents must be interviewed immediately to ensure the child's safety.
- Hold an in-person, individual interview of parent(s), other adults in the home, the child's siblings, and other verbal children residing in the home. Non-verbal children must be observed.
- Complete CARL checks of members of the family and other subjects regularly frequenting or living in the home.
- If a paramour-involved report, conduct Promis/Gavel check to determine record of criminal history.

- Thoroughly read and review prior investigations.
- Interview the Reporter, and others identified in the current report or related information as having knowledge of the incident.
- Hold an in-person, individual interview with alleged child victim(s), assess the child's physical condition, and complete a safety assessment.
- Hold an in-person or phone interview with law enforcement, if police have had contact on report.
- Contact the primary Worker if a service case is currently open.
- Interview the alleged perpetrator in person.
- Complete a risk assessment in accordance with policy, see [CP&P-III-B-6-600](#). Use CP&P Form [22-23](#), New Jersey CP&P Family Risk Assessment.
- Complete a Caregiver Strengths and Needs Assessment in accordance with policy, see [CP&P-III-B-6-600](#). Use CP&P Form [22-24](#), New Jersey CP&P SDM™ Caregiver Strengths and Needs Assessment.
- Complete a Child Strength and Needs Assessment in accordance with policy, see [CP&P-III-B-6-600](#). Use CP&P Form [22-25](#), New Jersey CP&P SDM™ Child Strength and Needs Assessment.
- Hold an in-person, individual interview with all adults and verbal children of the perpetrator's household. Non-verbal children must be observed.
- Interview all identified witnesses who are reported to have knowledge of the incident.
- If the family or the subjects identify two or more possible collateral contacts, at least two must be interviewed either by phone or in person.
- Interview the prior Worker if service case is currently closed but has been open within the past two years.
- Interview other community professionals who have first-hand knowledge of the incident.
- When there are other children in the home, interview school personnel and/or child care provider who has knowledge of the child and/or the level of parental care provided to the child.

- Interview primary care physician or physician who has seen child in past 6 months if past history of maltreatment is alleged.
- Interview child protective services in other states in which the family members have resided in the previous five years.

Written approval -- The above elements are required for every investigation into abandonment or desertion. The Supervisor's approval is required, in writing, if it is acceptable for any of the above steps to be eliminated from the investigation process.

The Supervisor documents his or her approval on a NJ SPIRIT Contact Activity Note, printable as Contact Sheet, CP&P Form [26-52](#).

#### **REQUIRED MEDICAL INFORMATION AND/OR CONSULTATIONS** **12-30-2004**

- The Worker must ensure that the child receives an immediate medical examination if evidence exists that the child is in need of urgent medical care.
- Medical records of current treatment/diagnosis and relevant past treatment.

#### **LAW ENFORCEMENT/PROSECUTOR INVOLVEMENT OR NOTIFICATION** **12-30-2004**

- It is mandatory that the Child Protective Investigator notify law enforcement and the Prosecutor if protective custody is taken.